



December 6, 2010

Dear Redistricting Commissioners:

On behalf of the Asian Pacific American Legal Center (APALC), a member of Asian American Center for Advancing Justice, please accept our congratulations on being selected as the first eight members of the Citizens Redistricting Commission. We greatly appreciate your service to the state and look forward to working with you to ensure a fair and transparent redistricting process.

Starting over a year ago, APALC has worked hard to encourage qualified and diverse individuals to apply for the commission. We were pleased to see that the applicant pool, as it was narrowed to 120 semifinalists, 60 finalists and ultimately to 36 candidates, was rich in several aspects of diversity, including economic status and geography, and especially rich in terms of racial and gender balance. However, in looking at the results of the November 18, 2010 random drawing, it is clear that Asian Americans are well represented among the first eight members, but that on the other hand, other racial and ethnic communities are underrepresented, as well as some geographic regions.

Accordingly, APALC asks you to consider the overall diversity of California in terms of race, gender, and geography when selecting the remaining six commissioners. To ensure a truly diverse commission, we urge you in particular to consider the representation of other ethnic communities, especially those communities that are currently underrepresented on the commission in relation to their share of California's population.

Additionally, APALC believes that it is important to review the skills and experiences of the remaining applicants in order to round out the commission, and we are encouraged that you have already begun discussing this. APALC urges you to select individuals who have demonstrated a commitment to and experience working with the federal Voting Rights Act. As the training session by Professor Justin Levitt reflected, determinations of Voting Rights Act compliance are complex and having commissioners with a sophisticated understanding of the Voting Rights Act will aid the entire commission in fulfilling its obligation to comply with it.

Thank you for the opportunity to share our comments and congratulations again on your appointment.

Truly yours,

Stewart Kwoh
President and Executive Director

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